United Nations A/C.2/61/8

General Assembly

Distr.: General
9 November 2006

Original: English

Sixty-first session
Second Committee
Agenda item 56 (b)
Groups of countries in special situations: specific actions related to the particular needs and problems of landlocked developing countries: outcome of the International Ministerial Conference of Landlocked and Transit Developing Countries and Donor Countries and International Financial and Development Institutions on Transit Transport Cooperation

Letter dated 7 November 2006 from the representatives of Azerbaijan and Turkey to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

We are writing in response to the letter dated 10 August 2006 from the Permanent Representative of the Republic of Armenia to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General (A/60/977) with regard to agenda item 55 (b) of the sixtieth session of the General Assembly.

Turkey and Azerbaijan strongly believe that strengthened cooperation in the fields of economy and trade, together with diversification of energy and transport routes, would considerably contribute to economic growth, stability and welfare in the region. This conviction led to the materialization, with its inauguration on 13 July 2006 at the Ceyhan Terminal in Turkey, of the Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyhan crude oil pipeline, once referred in some circles as the "Pipe Dream". Another important component of the East-West Energy Corridor, the Baku-Tbilisi-Erzurum natural gas pipeline, is to be operational by 2007.

As we firmly value the spirit of cooperation in the region, together with Georgia, we have also decided to realize the Kars-Akhalkalaki-Tbilisi-Baku (KATB) railroad connection project. On 25 May 2005, the Presidents of the three countries signed a joint declaration on the KATB project, which foresees the construction of a new 98 km-long railroad (68 km in Turkey and 30 km in Georgia) and the rehabilitation of the existing 160 km-long Akhalkalaki-Tbilisi railway. According to the data given in the feasibility report, the total cost of the project is estimated to be $440 million ($220 million for the Turkish part and $200 million for the Georgian part).

We believe that the KATB project will become a segment of a greater undertaking, which would link the KATB railway to the European railroad system

06-60979S (E) 141106

through a tunnel built under the Bosphorus Strait, in the west, and to the trans-Asian railway system (Baku-Caspian-Turkmenbashi, Almaty-China), in the east.

The project is not intended to infringe upon the interests of any State, including Armenia; on the contrary the project is targeted at development of regional and trans-regional relations and collaboration. There are other energy and transport projects carried out in the region along with KATB and Armenia could have joined and benefited from those projects. Armenia was given numerous opportunities to take relevant measures to establish normal relations with its neighbours that would have enabled it to participate in regional cooperation initiatives.

Thus, Azerbaijan and Turkey cannot afford to miss the momentum to develop partnerships in pursuit of regional economic growth and prosperity and will continue to work towards strengthening regional cooperation meeting their economic and political interests.

I should be grateful if you would have the text of the present letter circulated as a document of the General Assembly under agenda item 56 (b).

(*Signed*) Ilgar **Mammadov**
Chargé d'affaires a.i. of the Republic of Azerbaijan
to the United Nations

(*Signed*) Baki **İlkin**
Ambassador
Permanent Representative of the Republic of Turkey
to the United Nations